



Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board

Strategic Plan 2019-2022

Purpose

To contribute to occupational health and safety by facilitating the education of graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills to enter the workplace as effective entry-level OHS professionals. The core activity of the Board is through accreditation to recognise those programs that meet standards established by the Board.

Mission

To ensure that OHS professional education is based on educational design and review processes, and delivery of learning appropriate to develop graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills to enter the workplace as an entry-level generalist OHS professional.

Vision

The vision of the Accreditation Board is that OHS professional education is based on strong scientific and technical concepts, evidenced-informed, delivered by suitably competent persons and so recognised by the profession, government, industry and the community.

Values

The work of the Accreditation Board and external and internal relationships are guided by the values of:

- **Respect:** The accreditation process is intended to be constructive and to respect the expertise and academic autonomy of institutions providing OHS professional education. As a corollary, the institutions are expected to be open and transparent in providing all appropriate information to the accreditation process on request.
- **Flexibility:** The accreditation process recognises that each institution and each program is unique and this is to be valued. Thus, the criteria for accreditation are outcome-based allowing institutions the maximum flexibility in achieving the required standards.
- **Alignment:** The accreditation process will, as far as is possible, be aligned with the Higher Education Standards Framework, the Joint Statement of Principles for Professional Accreditation signed by Professions Australia and Universities Australia and internal university review schedules.
- **Transparency:** The accreditation process will be open to external scrutiny; conducted in a consultative and consensus-building collegiate fashion, transparent and fair, and balance academic priorities with those of the OHS profession.
- **Evidenced-based:** Accreditation policy, criteria and process will be underpinned by evidence-based educational theory and contemporary OHS knowledge and practice.

Strategic priorities

The strategic priorities for the Board 2019-2022 are to

1. Continuously improve the accreditation process taking into account feedback from stakeholders, AQF review recommendations and BoK updates.
2. Build and maintain credibility in the accreditation process through influencing stakeholders, improving communication of the benefits of accreditation and other relevant activities.



Environment or context

The Accreditation Board has been in operation since August 2011. The pilot accreditation program was delivered in 2012.

Currently there are 32 programs eligible for accreditation by the Board, of which 3 are not yet accredited (One of those is in the process of accreditation).

The Australian Tertiary Qualifications and Standards Authority (TEQSA) is well established and monitors compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF). This has allowed the Board to refocus the re-accreditation on program-level continuous improvement.

A review into the Australian Qualifications Framework was conducted in 2018-19. The final report was published in October 2019 and will require university and accreditation processes to be updated to reflect adopted recommendations.

The Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board is prepared to provide advice on OHS qualifications both national and international on request of the Australian Government.

The rapidly changing nature of work requires that university programs adapt their content and teaching methodologies to prepare graduates who can operate effectively in that context.

Stakeholders

TEQSA

AIHS

WHS University Program Leaders

Universities Australia

Professions Australia

WHS educators

WHS professionals

WHS researchers

Employers

Potential students

Students

WHS professional bodies including AIOH, HFESA, ANZSOM, AFOEM

WHS State Regulators

Safe Work Australia

Employer associations

Employee associations

Aspirational Goals

- Accredited OHS professional qualifications are sought by aspiring professionals and valued by practicing OHS professionals and employers.
- All Australian OHS professional education programs are accredited.
- Higher Education providers value OHS professional education accreditation and the accredited status of their programs.

Outcomes

Accreditation criteria reflect OHS professional and education standards and continue to align with the HESF, AQF and BoK.



Resources

The accreditation process is seen as valid, fair and reliable and valued by universities, professionals and employers.

The Board is auspiced by the Australian Institute of Health and Safety (AIHS). The members of the Board are OHS Academics and OHS professionals who volunteer their time.

Relevant professional bodies such as the AIOH, HFESA, ANZSOM and AFOEM are supporting the work of the Board through the ongoing provision of members.

Assessment panel members are drawn from the AIHS, university program leaders and professional networks. They are also volunteers.

Accreditation fees are charged to universities that have accredited programs.

The Registrar role is a part-time funded position.